all State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have abolished tuition fee in Government Schools upto upper primary level. Education in schools run by local bodies and private aided institutions is mostly free in the States/UTs. However, private unaided schools which constitute 3.7 percent of the total elementary education schools in the country, do charge fee. Beyond elementary stage, the position differs from state to state. Some States, UTs have extended this facility to girls studying in Secondary|Senior Secondary stage also.

Non-Formal Education Programme

1631. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the non-formal education programme is being revamped to enable drop outs and working children to receive basic elementary education outside the formal educational system in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof in this respect;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the programme will focus only on girls; and

(e) if so, whether the programme is operational in all the States if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF EDUCATION AND DEPTT. OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA): (a) The programme of non-formal education has been recently revised and revamped for implementation in the VIIIth plan.

(b) Under the revised scheme, the cost parameters from the centre level onwards including honorarium to NFE functionaries have been enhanced substantially. Moreover, the share of central assistance to States|UTs for co-educational NFE centres and administrative and resource support has been raised from 50 per cent to 60 per cent. The percentage of girls centres has been increased from 25 per cent to 40 per cent. The revised scheme also lays emphasis on strengthening training of NFE functionaries and the monitoring system, development of good quality teaching/learing material, enlisting community participation, promoting greater flexibility in implementation, etc.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir. The programme lays special emphasis on girls education. However, all children, both non-starters and school drop-outs in the age group of 6—14 could avail of the benefits of the scheme.

(e) No, Sir. The programme is in operation in 20 States|UTs. The remaining States/UTs have not come forward with their proposals within the frame work of the scheme.

Japanese aid to Barkatullah University in Bhopal

1632. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Barkatullah University of Bhopal is the only one selected from Madhya Pradesh for special Japanese aid to strengthen environmental studies;

(b) if so, whether the amount will be routed through the University Grants Commission (UGC);

(c) what is the total aid to be provided to the said University; and

(d) whether any concrete proposals/mediations in this regard have been prepared by the University with details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF EDUCATION AND DEPTT. OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.